

Faith and Order

Paper No. 58

ECUMENICAL EXERCISE II

— THE CHURCH OF GOD

— THE RUSSIAN OLD RITUALISTS

— THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Edited by

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ECUMENICAL EXERCISE II

INTRODUCTION

It is often said that the period between the Lausanne Faith and Order Conference of 1927 and that of Lund in 1952 represented a time of "comparative ecclesiology" — that is, a time when through mutual witness and study, comparison and discussion, Christians of many traditions began to learn of one another's existence, history and distinctiveness at a new and deeper level.

Although Faith and Order studies in ecclesiology have moved beyond the stage of mere comparison, the necessity for deepening communication and understanding among the churches has not diminished. It is vitally important, both for those churches which are members of the World Council of Churches and for those which are not, to gain complete, correct information regarding one another. From adequate information acquaintance arises, based, not on superficial caricature, but upon the genuine self-understanding of a church. And from such acquaintance, mutual acceptance, understanding, and eventually fellowship can emerge — all essential ingredients of the ecumenical movement.

The following short studies have been written on the initiative of the Faith and Order Secretariat; they are published to foster and aid such understanding among the churches. In each case a scholar has prepared a sketch of a church which is not a member of the World Council of Churches, outlining its doctrine, polity, history and particularity as he sees it. This paper was then sent, anonymously insofar as possible, to a number of the members and officers of this church, for correction, suggested revision, and supplementation. In the light of comments received, the original paper was revised and is now published. Thus it may be said, each sketch represents the thinking and opinion of many people; each attempts to paint a picture of a church which is felt to be accurate and complete by its own members.

In this publication (*Ecumenical Exercise II*), three churches are described, two of American, and one of Russian origin. Another such publication will appear later. The first in this series (which included the Southern Baptist Convention, Kimbanguist Church in the Congo, Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and the Pentecostal movement in Europe) was printed in the *Ecumenical Review* of January 1967.

We extend thanks to all those who participated in the preparation of these studies — scholars, pastors, church officers and laymen. As was pointed out in the introduction to the first Ecumenical Exercise, it is they who are the authors of this series.

GERALD F. MOEDE

THE CHURCH OF GOD

It is an anomaly of Christian history that the simple name, "Church of God", by which the Apostle Paul addressed the young congregations of the first century should come to be so ambiguous in the twentieth century.

No one really knows how many different groups of Christians in the world use some form of this particular designation. One authority, Dr. Frank S. Mead, estimates that in the United States alone at least two hundred distinct religious bodies unaffiliated with each other use this title or variations of it to identify themselves.¹ Many of these groups, of course, are quite small, often comprising only one or at most a few congregations. Others have several thousand adherents and operate rather extensively in particular sections of the country. A few groups bearing this name, however, exceed 100,000 in membership and have a national constituency as well as considerable activity in other parts of the world. It is toward one of these larger bodies, usually designated as the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), that attention is now directed.

General Characteristics

This particular movement, and its members do prefer that their corporate witness be called a movement rather than a denomination or sect, had its origin in the early 1880's in the American Middle West. In the almost ninety years of its history it has spread throughout the world. While the major portion of its constituency is in the United States and Canada, there are congregations or mission stations in Mexico, Central America, four countries of South America, the West Indies, in eleven countries of Europe, Australia, Japan, India, East Pakistan, Lebanon, Egypt, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and on several of the Pacific islands. Since no membership rolls are kept it is impossible to give an exact figure as to the number of people involved in the movement, but, based on Sunday church school enrollments and estimates by pastors and missionaries the number would probably be near 300,000.

¹ *Handbook of Denominations* (New York : Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1951), p. 54.

The 1969 *Yearbook of the Church of God, United States and Canada*, lists 3,270 congregations (961 of these outside the United States and Canada) and 3,776 ministers and missionaries.

The general agencies and publishing house (Warner Press) are located in Anderson, Indiana, hence the clarifying parenthesis after the name. This does not mean, however, that the Anderson offices function as a world headquarters for the movement, for the work in many countries is autonomous and only a fraternal relationship is maintained with the American church. (This signifies that organs and work in areas outside of the United States will sometimes bear names and structure different from those described in the following pages.) The three major periodical publications in English are *Vital Christianity*, the general church paper; *Christian Leadership*, for teachers and pastors; and *Church of God Missions*, a missionary education journal. Other periodicals in German, Spanish, Danish and Japanese are published where appropriate. A weekly radio programme, "The Christian Brotherhood Hour", is broadcast worldwide over more than 300 stations in English and Spanish. The American congregations join in supporting a theological seminary, two liberal arts colleges and a Bible college. Three other colleges operate with regional support. Schools of various kinds have also been established in the West Indies, in Mexico, in Germany, in Kenya, and in Japan.

Background

A religious movement can be properly understood only in the light of the circumstances and motivations which brought it into existence. Even though the circumstances and goals may change, the thrust of the group is anchored in its original dynamics. To understand the Church of God, then, we must look at the time and place and culture which gave it birth.

The period following the American Civil War saw marked changes in religious attitudes and interests. Both the thinking and the practice of Christian churches were in a process of transition. In the older churches along the Atlantic seaboard a strong reaction against the revivalism of an earlier time had developed and was accompanied by more than a slight tendency toward a new liberalism in theology, with many basic beliefs being called into question. The low moral tone of society in general brought a wave of religious indifference, and a spirit of secularism had come to dominate many of the clergy and their congregations. Practically all churches were much less insistent than formerly on a definite

religious experience as a qualification for membership, with the result that the line between the "saved" and the "unsaved" became less and less distinct. People seemed more interested in discussing Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* than in obtaining "salvation" for their souls.

In the Middle West these same tendencies were also in evidence, despite the postwar efforts of some of the churches to conduct "revivals". In the main it may be said that the dying embers of evangelistic zeal were divided among the various denominations and were diverted to start new fires of loyalty to the separate groups. This resurgent sectarianism resulted in a sharper drawing of the lines which separated Christians from each other, and bitter rivalry arose among the several competing denominations. Schism broke the ranks of some of the larger communions and a number of new competitors entered the field through this splintering process. This was indeed the heyday of militant sectarianism.

The total impact of all this competitive activity did not bring any life to American Christianity, however. With certain notable exceptions it may be said that most of the churches of this period had a shortened view of their mission and a distorted sense of direction. The Great Commission was usually defined in terms of making additions to the membership rolls — often at the expense of other groups who were trying to do the same. Obviously this was a goal far short of the New Testament challenge to preach the gospel of love and repentance. In the main it may be said that the American Christianity of this time was shallow and was moving in the direction of disunity and competition rather than toward unity and co-operation.

One co-operative venture, however, transcended the barriers of denominationalism and sought to remedy some of the existing evils. This was the holiness movement. Although a loosely organized enterprise (its efforts were never completely co-ordinated) the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness, first organized in Vineland, New Jersey, in July, 1867, was a concrete expression of a rather widespread desire to restore genuine Christian piety. Through sponsoring holiness camp-meetings and encouraging the distribution of holiness literature this organization sought to promote the preaching of experiential religion, particularly the doctrine of sanctification, among the various ministers who were receptive to this kind of emphasis. The leaders were very careful, however, to do no violence to the denominational system. In most instances, membership in a denomination was necessary in order to be a member of the Association. Thus, the believers in holiness were

given opportunity to stand against the wickedness and shallow religion of the day, but in so doing they were forced to defend the disunity of the church and the competitive character of its witness.

Many of the early leaders of the Church of God reformation were associated with the holiness movement. They were attracted by the positive emphasis on personal piety which they found among these brethren, but there were certain things which distressed them. While delighted to appropriate the truths which had been lifted up by the holiness people, they were not satisfied to let the unhealthy condition of the church itself go unchallenged. In a most straightforward manner, they came to grips with this issue and pointed an accusing finger at the sinful divisions in the body of Christ. These men issued a call to sincere Christians everywhere to sever their relations with "sectism" and to stand in the truth of God alone. They had no finespun theological theories to promote, but they were greatly concerned about the tragically divided state of the church. They sought to restore its unity and holiness in the most direct way possible.

Origins

It thus becomes apparent that the Church of God reformation was born out of a deep sensitivity to the acute needs of Christianity as it existed at this particular time and place in history. The movement is to be understood and its genius is to be explained only as this life-situation context is recognized. Any later tendencies in the group to be aloof from the grass-roots problems of the Christian world or any inclinations to define mission in purely theoretical terms are strictly departures from the original character of the movement. The early leaders were not ivory-tower dreamers. They were close to the needs of their world, and their strategy for meeting those needs was direct action.

It is difficult to name a single individual who could be regarded as the founder of the Church of God movement, for many leaders associated with various denominations seemed to receive similar insights and develop like concerns at about the same time. The most influential factor in bringing these people together was a periodical called the *Gospel Trumpet*. It was only natural that the editor of this semi-monthly paper should come to occupy a place of prominent leadership. For that reason, the name of Daniel S. Warner is usually mentioned first in listing the pioneers of the movement. A brief look at the spiritual pilgrimage of this man

will indicate something of the character of the new movement which developed.

Warner was a native of Ohio. His parents were not affiliated with any church, but while in his early twenties he was converted in a "Protracted meeting" held by an itinerant evangelist (probably a Winebrennerian) in a schoolhouse near his home. For some time he did not join any of the churches in his neighbourhood but spent a great deal of time in Bible study and prayer. It was only after he came to feel that he was called to the ministry that he began to look for a denomination to join. After considerable investigation he eventually chose to affiliate with the group represented by the schoolhouse evangelist, the General Eldership of the Churches of God in North America, a relatively small body founded in Pennsylvania by John Winebrenner in 1825. He was licensed to preach in 1867 and continued his ministry with this group for ten years.

In the course of his ministry he came into contact with some of the leaders of the then flourishing "holiness movement". Though inter-denominational in character this particular movement was composed mostly of those of Methodist persuasion who felt that the Wesleyan doctrine of "perfection" was not being sufficiently emphasized in Methodism. Warner had no background for this kind of teaching so he at first rejected the idea completely. In the late 1870's, however, he became convinced that the doctrine was scriptural and became an even stronger advocate than he had been an opponent. In his enthusiasm to preach what seemed to him to be the most crucial doctrine of the Christian faith, he became a participant in the various activities of the "holiness associations" throughout Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. But his zeal soon brought him into difficulty with the ecclesiastical machinery of his denomination, and his license was revoked. He later joined a dissident group from the same denomination, but found no permanent answer to his search for what he felt was the true church.

Through these experiences and through his participation in the holiness movement he eventually became convinced that the basic "sin" of Protestantism was its sectarian division. Accordingly, in 1881 he took the bold step of separating himself from his denomination and from the inter-denominational holiness association in which he had been active. He declared himself to be free from all "human creeds and party names" and to be committed only to the building up of the "apostolic church of the living God". After taking such a stand and publishing it, he soon

discovered that many others had gone through a similar pilgrimage and had come to the same conclusions, some even earlier than he. From these widely-scattered beginnings there eventually developed a movement which identified itself as a "reformation". In a very short time, Warner found common purpose with other strong leaders such as J. C. Fisher, A. J. Kilpatrick, A. B. Palmer, S. L. Speck, Sebastian Mechels, G. T. Clayton, Henry Wickersham, William N. Smith, Barney Warren and others. Separating themselves from a half dozen different denominations, these men were drawn together by their shared conviction that the Christian witness in their day was being distorted by the divisive and competitive sectarian system and being weakened by failure to proclaim and uphold a high standard of holiness within the church itself.

Distinguishing Doctrines

These early leaders drew up no formal creed or statement of faith. As a matter of fact, they studiously avoided any attempt at a formulation outside the New Testament itself. The "whole Bible" was a ready answer to any inquiry about their beliefs. An examination of the preaching and writing of the pioneers indicates that they seriously attempted to live up to their claims. They could not have been "reformers", however, if they had not focused particular attention on certain matters which they felt were truly Biblical and were being either neglected or misinterpreted by existing churches. The particular emphases which they lifted up and vigorously proclaimed may be summed up under the following seven headings :

"Into All the Truth". An examination of the early preaching and writing reveals that one of the chief points of distinctiveness among the pioneers was their desire to preach *all* the truth of the gospel. Because of this ideal there was a deliberate attempt to include all that was taught in the New Testament. There was a stated premise of being open to all the truth that the Bible contained.

"The God of Peace Sanctify You Wholly" (*1 Thess. 5 : 23*). One of the primary principles set forth was that every genuine Christian ought to live a life that was holy. The holy life was defined as one free from outward sin and also free from any inward intention to do wrong. That they expected all within their fellowship to live up to this standard is evidenced by the fact that from the beginning they spoke of themselves

as “the saints”. The achievement of sanctification was through a second “work of grace” subsequent to justification.

“*Be Not Conformed to This World*” (*Rom. 12 : 2*). The doctrine of holiness was not an abstract theological concept to these early leaders ; it was a practical standard for everyday living. Positively, holiness was defined as a life under the complete direction of the Holy Spirit. Negatively, it was defined as nonconformity to the world.

“*Come Out . . . and Be Ye Separate*” (*II Cor. 6 : 17*). The early leaders of the Church of God reformation were sometimes called “come-outers” because they advocated the withdrawal of all true Christians from the various sects and denominations in which they were scattered and divided. They believed it was possible to reconstitute the church of the New Testament by inviting all who had been spiritually reborn to enter into a fellowship which was not restricted by any of the organizational or creedal limitations which had been established by the existing churches.

“*The Lord Added to the Church*” (*Acts 2 : 47*). Pioneer leaders of the Church of God movement were convinced that the various systems of church-joining allowed many unworthy people to become affiliated with what was supposed to be a divine institution. They searched the Scriptures for clear guidance as to the proper method of admitting people into the church. In order to avoid the error of presuming to do God’s judging for him these reformers declared that one becomes a member of the church when he experiences the new birth. No rite or ceremony is necessary to admit one into the divine fellowship. As soon as one’s sins are forgiven, he at that moment enters the brotherhood of the redeemed.

“*Now Hath God Set the Members in the Body*” (*I Cor. 12 : 18*). One of the most apparent aspects of the early preaching was the horror which the leaders had for all types of humanly devised organization in the church. There were two reasons why they felt this way. The first was a continuation of their belief that the church was a divine institution and was not subject to human structuring. The second was a burning conviction that the Holy Spirit had been designated as the full governing agency of the church and any attempt at “man rule” was sheer interference with the divine plan.

“*That They May All Be One*” (*John 17 : 21*). The early leaders were not content to point to the error and sin of division. They did not stop

with an invitation to “come out” of the sects. They went a step further and sought to demonstrate that a real visible unity of the church was an achievable ideal. The accomplishment of this goal, they said, could never be reached by applying external pressures, by developing a super organization, or by compromising differences. It was possible only as people were brought together by sharing in the common experience of redemption through Jesus Christ, were willing to open themselves to all truth, and measured their lives according to their full understanding of the will of God.

Approximately a decade after the beginning of the Movement, some of the leaders, including Warner, became interested in the study of biblical prophecy, motivated initially by a desire to refute Seventh-Day Adventist teachings. In the process of this study, it was discovered that with only slight re-interpretations of the chronological schematics of the Adventist’s church-historical approach to the apocalyptic writings it was possible to date the restoration of the church at 1880, the approximate time when this Movement had begun. This excited many of the preachers to more intensive study and the eventual development of charts and lectures which identified this Movement as a prophetic fulfillment, the “evening light”, the “last reformation”.

This rationale for the Movement’s existence was generally accepted for around forty years and undoubtedly gave an added thrust to the “truths” formulated by the pioneers. By the 1930’s, however, several of the Movement’s scholars had offered variant interpretations of the apocalyptic writings. Since that time, many, if not most, of the leaders find it possible to present the essential aspects of their message without setting them in this context of prophetic fulfillment. While many still hold to the older view, it is not an item of contention or a major threat to internal unity.

Polity and Organization

In order to more adequately understand the dynamics of the Movement it is necessary to review some of the developments in structure. It has already been noted that the early leaders of the Church of God had a great fear of assuming authority in the church on any basis other than direct leadership by the Holy Spirit. They abhorred all man-made organizations and identified “man rule” as a primary evil of the sectarian world. An ecclesiastical system based on elected officers seemed to them

to be inconsistent with the true nature of the church. Consequently, at first they sought to avoid any semblance of stated organization in their own fellowship. They were content to allow the Spirit to “set the members in the body as it pleases him”.

Throughout the history of the Movement, this ideal of Holy Spirit leadership has persisted. An examination of the group’s ideology reveals, however, that the interpretation of the manner in which this leadership was to be exercised has undergone periodic changes. In terms of a developing polity five periods may be identified :

Individual Response to Holy Spirit Leadership. For the first twenty years the only structure was the publishing work and this was owned and operated by individuals. Sometimes this was one person, D. S. Warner, sometimes this was a partnership including two or three persons. Each minister functioned as he felt directed by the Holy Spirit. Although “assemblies” were held periodically, they functioned as fellowship meetings without any stated officers or program. The tendency was for authority to be exercised by certain “leading” ministers, especially the editor of the *Gospel Trumpet*. Elections were held to be evidence of man rule. Consequently, corporate title to property was held in the name of trustees who were appointed and generally agreed upon.

The Period of Expedient but Unplanned Structuring. In the next twenty years some organization came to be recognized as necessary. The publishing work was organized first as a stock company and later as a corporation with a self-perpetuating board. Still the only organized structure, the Gospel Trumpet Company became the media for carrying on all aspects of the general work of the Movement, including missionary work, the central camp meeting, an old peoples’ home, etc. The Company also became responsible for the publication of ministerial lists and eventually a Yearbook. (The compilation of such lists was made necessary by the need for certification in order to obtain clergy rates on the railroad). The names included were usually on the basis of certification by other ministers.

The Period of National Agency Development. The establishment of the General Ministerial Assembly in 1917 provided a means by which the ministry in general could have a voice in national programs and policies. By designating existing agencies such as Gospel Trumpet Company and the Missionary Board as “subordinate” agencies responsible to the

General Ministerial Assembly, a much more democratic base was established for national work. This established pattern opened the door for the development of additional agencies in the next decade, including the Board of Church Extension and Home Missions (1920), the Board of Christian Education (1923), and Anderson College (1925). Although the General Ministerial Assembly was limited to those who attended the annual meeting, its open character provided a channel through which any minister could have a voice in national affairs.

Period of Development of State Structures. Area assemblies had existed from the early period of the Movement's history, but these had continued to be primarily fellowship meetings. The earliest development which thrust responsibility on state assemblies was the establishment of machinery to certify those whose names would appear in the *Yearbook* by sectional registration committees. State assemblies assumed further responsibilities as youth camps developed in various areas. State organizations later came to assume responsibility for area camp meetings and other programs which heretofore had been locally controlled.

Period of Planned Correlation. The necessity for providing co-ordinated promotion between the national agencies and the various states led to the calling of a national conference on this problem in 1953. This was the beginning of a new period of co-ordination. The developing integrity of the state structures and direct assistance from national agencies in fund raising activities placed state organizations in a position of new importance. Consequently, there has been an apparent move toward the distribution of both authority and responsibility so that the work of the church operates from a broader basis. Added to this is the inclusion of laymen as members of most general agencies and the consequent retitling of the national governing body to General Assembly. The development of delegated assemblies in many states which provide for laymen as well as ministers continues the trend toward spiritual democracy in the Church of God.

It thus becomes apparent that it is impossible to classify the polity of the Church of God according to the standard categories — congregational, presbyterial, episcopal. There is somewhat of all three, with the primary focus on the congregational pattern but with developments in the direction of presbyterianism. Many adherents prefer to avoid any of these labels, however, and simply refer to their polity as being charismatic.

Objectives

By way of summary and projection, it would perhaps be well to lift up again some of the themes and objectives which have guided the Movement throughout its history. From the earliest days there has been considerable use of the term, "the truth", but this has never been thought of as something static. Though truth itself does not change, it is realized that man's understanding can grow; thus, there is such a thing as "new" truth. This "open at the top" attitude has made for considerable flexibility despite a basic theological conservatism. Some contemporary analysts have said that herein lies the real genius of the movement — the creative tension produced in the fusion of a liberal spirit and a conservative theology.

From a study of the history of this group, and an examination of its present programme, it is possible to discern some of the goals toward which it seems to be striving. It needs to be understood, of course, that even these goals have not been written down and formally adopted; they are simply generally understood operating principles. If asked to outline the objectives of the movement, almost any preacher or layman would eventually get around to mentioning these three:

1. *To proclaim the truth that to be a genuine Christian one must enter into a life-changing relationship with God.* This means, of course, an emphasis on personal conversion as necessary for salvation. In line with such a view, infants are not baptized, though they are dedicated. Baptism, which is regarded as an "ordinance" rather than a sacrament (along with the Lord's Supper and Feet Washing), thus becomes an outward symbol of an already accomplished work of regeneration. But the life-changing relationship must not stop there. The believer must "go on to perfection". This is accomplished through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. At this point the movement continues the emphasis on holiness begun by John Wesley.

2. *To emphasize the fact that the church is a divine institution composed only of true believers.* This concern has manifested itself at two points particularly: a fear of man-made ecclesiasticism and a policy that only God can judge who is really a member of the church. The fear of "man-rule" meant that the movement existed for over thirty-five years without any formal structure whatsoever. Finally it was deduced that there was a difference between organizing the church and organizing the *work* of the church, so, beginning around 1917, a fairly comprehensive functional

structure has developed. In the main, this development has been along the lines of congregationalism, with perhaps some elements of presbyterian and even episcopal patterns. Behind the structure, however, there is still the charismatic principle — that the Holy Spirit is the real determiner of policy and action in the church.

In regard to the policy on church membership, the movement has its most obvious unique feature. It neither admits nor expels members. Anyone who testifies to having been redeemed is regarded as being a member of the church. There are no membership rolls, though most pastors have a mailing list of those who regularly, or irregularly, attend ; however, some churches are now developing registries of recognized members. The reason for this practice of “open” membership is simply that “man cannot judge the heart”. Consequently, church membership, along with salvation, is a matter between every person and his God.

3. *To lift up the ideal of Christian unity.* In the 1880's it was not very popular to assert that God's church is one and that division of the Body of Christ is a sin. Such statements are being heard from many quarters today, of course, and particularly from the great conferences of the ecumenical movement. Strangely enough, however, the leaders in the Church of God have not been the pioneers in the current wave of ecumenicity. Until recent years, there has been a tendency to remain somewhat aloof from councils and federations of churches. It was felt that true unity could not be achieved by the mere mingling of divisions, and there was an unwillingness to settle for part-way measures. Within the past two decades, however, many in the movement, without compromising their original conviction, have come to see that there must be some intermediate steps, so there has been considerable participation in interchurch activities through local and state councils, the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. The Movement, as such, is not a member of any ecumenical organization, and prevailing opinion seems to indicate that no joining is contemplated in the near future. Both ministers and laymen, however, are quick to point out that their attitude is co-operative and that Christian unity is a major goal toward which the Movement is striving.

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VI

THE RUSSIAN OLD RITUALISTS

In the second half of the 17th century a split occurred in the Russian Orthodox Church. The immediate cause leading to this split was the correction of the texts of service books and of ecclesiastical ritual, undertaken by Patriarch Nikon (1625-1658). A certain proportion of Orthodox Russian people refused to accept the Church reforms of Patriarch Nikon, considering them a distortion of the Orthodox faith and an introduction of Latin 'heresy'.

These people preserved among themselves the ancient, pre-reform service books and the ancient ecclesiastical rites, or, as they put it, the ancient faith. This is the origin of their name 'Old Believers' or 'Old Ritualists', and the split that developed was given the name 'Old Ritualist schism'.

Towards the end of the 1640's there took shape in Moscow a circle of men devoted to piety and religion. This circle was composed of influential secular and clerical personalities, backed by Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich and his confessor Archpriest Stefan Vonifatiyev. The members of this circle decided to correct the Russian service books from the Greek originals and to bring Russian ecclesiastical and liturgical practice into line with the contemporary Greek. Stefan Vonifatiyev and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich initiated this reform, but it was carried out by Patriarch Nikon.

Shortly before Lent in 1653 Patriarch Nikon sent a "memorandum" to all the churches, which consisted of a set of instructions requiring the performance of four prostrations and twelve deep bows during the reading of St. Ephrem the Syrian's prayer "Lord and Master of my life", and also requiring that the sign of the Cross should be made with the first three fingers of the hand.

By this act, entirely uncalled for and performed solely on his own authority, the Patriarch changed the previous custom of performing sixteen prostrations during the reading of St. Ephrem the Syrian's prayer as well as that of making the sign of the Cross with two fingers, the index and middle fingers. This last custom was backed by the authority of the "Council of 100 Chapters" (Stoglav Sobor: 1551), which

decreed it a duty for all Russian Orthodox Christians to make the sign of the Cross with only two fingers. Certain influential personalities among the hierarchy rose in open rebellion against these instructions of Patriarch Nikon, among them Pavel, the Bishop of Kolomenski, and the Archpriests John Neronov, Avvakum, Daniil, and Loggin. However, these people were quickly exiled to different parts of the country by Patriarch Nikon.

Having encountered resistance, Patriarch Nikon decided to obtain the support of a Council for the carrying out of further reforms. The Council called in 1654 in Moscow resolved that the service books printed in Moscow should be corrected in the light of the ancient Slavonic and Greek service books.

In 1656 Patriarch Nikon summoned a new Council which decreed that henceforth all Russian Orthodox Christians should use three fingers for the sign of the Cross, and that whoever used two fingers was thereby separating himself from the Church.

The change from the two-fingered into the three-fingered sign of the Cross was not the only fruit of Patriarch Nikon's reform ; certain other Russian ecclesiastical rites and customs were replaced by their Greek opposite numbers. For example, prior to Patriarch Nikon's reforms in the Russian Orthodox Church the following customs were observed :

1. The Liturgy was performed with 7 altar-breads ;
2. The altar-breads were stamped on their upper surface with an 8-pointed cross, surrounded by the text 'Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the whole world' ;
3. Processions around the interior of the church during baptisms and weddings and the Easter Procession round the outside of the church used to go from East to West, that is, with the movement of the sun ;
4. 'Alleluia' was sung twice : 'Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to thee, O God' ;
5. The word 'true' was found in the 8th article of the Creed ; 'And in the Holy Spirit, the true and life-giving Lord' ;
6. The name of Christ the Saviour was written and pronounced 'Isus' ;
7. Priests and Bishops blessed the people with a two-fingered sign of the Cross, etc.

After the reform, these customs were replaced in the Russian Orthodox Church by the following :

1. The Liturgy is performed with 5 altar-breads ;
2. The altar-breads are stamped with a four-pointed Cross and the inscription 'Iis. Xs.nika' ;

Иис	Хс
ни	ка

3. Church processions now proceed in the direction opposite the movement of the sun ;
4. 'Alleluia' is sung thrice : 'Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to thee, O God' ;
5. The word 'true' in the 8th article of the Creed has been dropped as being absent from the Greek text ;
6. The name of Christ the Saviour is pronounced and written 'Iisus' ;
7. Priests and Bishops bless the people in the Greek manner, that is, with hand held in such a way as to symbolize the Holy Name, the fingers forming its initial letters. For many Russian people of that period these Greek corrections of Russian rites and customs seemed to be a betrayal of Russian Orthodoxy. This is what explains the violence of the protest against the ritual reforms of Patriarch Nikon.

Equally fierce criticism was directed against Patriarch Nikon's correction of ecclesiastical books. This was motivated not so much by the mere fact of correction, since books had been corrected even in Moscow and before Patriarch Nikon, as by the use of contemporary printed Greek books for the correction of Russian service books. Instead of correcting books printed in Moscow by checking them against Slavonic and Greek texts, as had been laid down by the Council of 1654, the revisers chose a book in current Greek liturgical use, translated it into Slavonic, then checked this translation against the ancient Greek and Slavonic texts and thereafter used it as their model for all corrections.

The trouble was that contemporary Greek service books, now being used as the model for Russian, were printed for the most part in the Latin printing houses of Venice, since the Greeks, being under the power of the Turks, had no printing houses of their own. This Western origin of Greek service books aroused the deepest mistrust in the minds of most contemporary Russians, who thought that the Latins who printed service books for the Greeks had ruined them by smuggling into them Latin 'heresies', and that in consequence the Russian service

books corrected in the light of these Greek ones at the order of Patriarch Nikon were not corrected but simply ruined.

To prove this point the critics turned to the newly-corrected editions of the service books. The texts of ecclesiastical prayers and chants had been somewhat changed, thanks to the new translation and correction, and they therefore sounded unfamiliar; certain expressions had been literally translated and were therefore unclear; there were variant readings, sometimes found even in different editions of the same corrected book. All these things served as a manifest confirmation for the supposed ruin of the service books. Furthermore, the participation in the work of correction of the Greek Arsenius, who had apostatized from Orthodoxy to Catholicism, and the absoluteness of the order to put away the old service books and celebrate only according to the new, contributed to the further undermining of confidence in the corrected version.¹ In the correction of the service books under Patriarch Nikon people saw exactly the same betrayal of Russian Orthodoxy as in the correction of the Ecclesiastical rites. In this way people came to believe that, as a result of Patriarch Nikon's reforms, the purity of Russian Orthodoxy was defiled and a 'Nikonian heresy' had made its appearance.

While Nikon was on the Patriarchal throne, resistance to his reforms was kept within narrow bounds, since it was crushed down by the Patriarch's powerful hand. But in 1658 Patriarch Nikon, in consequence of his estrangement from the Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, further complicated the situation in the Church by resigning the Patriarchate. The leaders of the Old Ritualists, Avvakum, Lazar and others were recalled from exile and conducted a vigorous campaign against the reforms of Patriarch Nikon, demanding their revocation. Their sufferings for the sake of the traditional Russian piety gave their preaching an authority that ensured it wide acceptance, especially among simple folk. Even certain Russian bishops were out of sympathy with the excesses of Patriarch Nikon. However, the reform was not a cause confined to Patriarch Nikon, and therefore the correction of service books went on even after he had renounced the Patriarchal throne.

In 1666 a Council was called in Moscow to deal with the case of Patriarch Nikon; it lasted into the next year and two Eastern Patriarchs took part

¹ Arsenius became a Roman Catholic during the time he lived in Italy, and was later forced to accept Islam and circumcision in Turkey.

in it, Paisios of Alexandria and Makarios of Antioch. This Council also gave its attention to the question of the Old Ritualists. The reforms of Patriarch Nikon were approved by the Council, although he himself was condemned for his abandonment of the Patriarchal throne, deprived of his ecclesiastical rank and exiled to the monastery of Ferapont. All adversaries of the reforms were anathematized by the Council as heretics and rebels. The Old Ritualists' leaders Avvakum, Fyodor, Lazar and Epiphanii, having refused at the Council to repent of their actions, were exiled to Pustozersk in the region of Arkhangelsk ; there in 1682 they were burned at the stake for what the official indictment described as "speaking great evil of the Imperial House".

The resolution of the Moscow Council of 1667 constituted the basis of all subsequent relationships with the Old Ritualists, both for the ecclesiastical and the civil authorities. The former, known also more commonly in the West under their alternative name of 'Old Believers', were persecuted by the latter and forced to abandon their ancestral homes in flight. Some took refuge in the deserted areas around the frontiers of their homeland, where various centres of Old Ritualists grew up : the Pomorye region of Karelia, Starodubie in the Briansk region, the Don region, Kerzhenets in the Gorkovski region and Siberia. Others went abroad, to Poland, Austria, Sweden and Turkey where they established their religious communities. Ever since 1667 the Old Ritualists have been formally cut off from the Greco-Russian Church and constitute a distinct religious society, the Old Ritualist Orthodox Church, which now has three centuries of history behind it.

In the early years of the 18th century the Old Ritualist movement divided into two main groupings ; the 'Popovtsi' and the 'Bespopovtsi'. Both names are built on the root 'Pop', the Russian word for priest ; the former title refers to those Old Ritualists who retained a priesthood, the latter to those who did not. The point is that after 1667 the Old Ritualists did not have a single Bishop to inaugurate among them the apostolic succession ; without that both the hierarchical priesthood and the sacraments were bound to come to an end among them. The Old Ritualists' priests slowly dwindled in number and, for lack of a Bishop, were not replaced. Some Old Ritualists proceeded in the conviction that Anti-Christ now ruled the world ; it was he who had uprooted the true priesthood, of which the unmistakable sign was the absence of Bishops among them. They therefore concluded that at such a time it was possible to do without priests ('Popes'), a decision that won them

the name of the 'Priestless' or 'Bespopovtsi'. Other Old Ritualists proceeded from the teaching of Holy Scripture that priesthood will endure in the Church for ever and that Anti-Christ has no power to uproot it; they could not therefore accept the conclusion of the Bespopovtsi and, in order to provide themselves with priests, decided to accept the services of runaway priests from the Greco-Russian church; this won them their name of 'Popovtsi' or even, with the additional root 'Begli', meaning 'runaway', or 'Beglopopovtsi'.

The Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists

The Bespopovtsi share the general position common to all Old Ritualists but with certain doctrinal features proper to themselves alone, based on certain eschatological convictions. According to this doctrine, Anti-Christ has come to power in the world and rules over it spiritually. Anti-Christ has uprooted the true priesthood and therefore in the time of Anti-Christ the Church can be priestless in the sense of having no hierarchy and consisting solely of lay-folk who confess the true faith and live by it.

It must therefore be noted that the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists deny the existence of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, not in principle but only *de facto*. They acknowledge that the priesthood, as a thing of divine institution, is an essential mark of the Church of Christ and should exist in it, but *de facto* does not, having been destroyed by Anti-Christ. In this the Bespopovtsi Old Believers differ sharply from Protestants who look on the hierarchical degrees within the Church not as a divine but as a man-made institution.

However, desiring to establish some kind of harmony between their teaching on the non-hierarchical condition of the Church with the scriptural teaching on the everlasting priesthood in the Church of Christ, the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists hold that the priesthood is of two kinds; one is sacramental, given through ordination, and the other is moral, in virtue of which every Christian is a priest. It is only the second kind that is everlasting.

Having no priests from whom to receive the sacrament, the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists have also modified the doctrine of the sacraments. They divide the sacraments into two categories according to their degree of importance for salvation; the first is 'indispensably required', that is, absolutely necessary; the second is simply 'required', that is to say, can be dispensed with in case of need. In the first category they place baptism,

penance and communion (the eucharist); in the second they place the priesthood, the anointing of the sick, marriage and confirmation. It was permitted for laymen to conduct baptism and penance in case of necessity; to this marriage was added later.

Laymen were not allowed to celebrate a communion service — hence the teaching of the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists concerning spiritual communion, that is, a very strong desire to receive communion.

With their strict observance of the prescriptions of ecclesiastical regulations (the Typikon), the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists perform almost all the collective services and private obligations imposed by the Orthodox Church, the liturgy alone excepted.

Not every layman among the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists has the right to hold a service, but only a man who has received a blessing to that end from a Teacher. That blessing is normally imparted at an assembly with the reading of prayers and bears the character of a succession. The man who has received such a blessing is called a Teacher or a 'Blessed Father' but he is not considered an hierarchical office-holder. In the course of time the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists have broken up into a number of independent ecclesiastical groupings or persuasions, the 'Pomortsi', the 'Theodosians'², the 'Philippians', the 'Pilgrims', the 'No-men' and others. The causes of the divisions lay in various quarrels on such matters as ritual, marriage, relations with the civil powers and so on.

The Pomortsi Old Ritualists

This group got its name from the place of their initial settlement, that is, the Pomorye district in which they settled towards the end of the 18th century around the river Vyg; they set up a community, headed by Daniil Vikulin (1654-1734). The Pomorye community owed its internal and external organization to the two Denisov brothers, Andrei (1674-1730) and Semyon (1682-1741), the well-known Old Ritualist writers.

An ecclesiastical Council presided over the community within whose competence lay all business of major importance, whether economic, administrative, religious or moral. The regulations laid down strict rules on every member of the Pomorye community: prayer, fasting, labour, frugality, chastity and obedience to elders. In time of prayer all were bound to stand with decorum, not laughing, not talking, not

² "Fyedoceyevtsi": the others, in Russian, are "Filippovtsi", "Stranniki", "Netovtsi" respectively.

glancing around, with formalized movements, including the performance at fixed times of deep bows or prostrations.

So far as the external prosperity of the Pomorye community is concerned, the Denisov brothers brought it to a flourishing condition. Stock-breeding, agriculture, marine products manufactured on Novaya Zemlya and other places, brick factories, tanneries and saw mills, trade in linen, fur, butter and fish with various Russian towns — all these things, with tribute taken from them by various sorts of collections from and offerings by worshippers, provided the resources for the upkeep of the Pomorye chapels, hermitages, monasteries, and schools. Disposing of such material wealth, enjoying the guidance of men such as the Denisov brothers and making full use of certain remarkable privileges granted them by Tsar Peter I (decrees of 1711 and 1714), the Pomorye community became one of the principal centres of the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists and a support to the Old Ritualists of Russia as a whole. To this community there came from various libraries and sacristies a multitude of ancient books, gospels, crosses and icons. The community opened four schools: (i) A school for general education, which produced many Old Ritualist writers; (ii) A school of calligraphy for the training of scribes, because the Old Ritualists were forbidden to print; (iii) A school of singing for the training of singers to serve Old Ritualist chapels; (iv) A school of icon painting.

Having received this sort of organization under the Denisov brothers, the Pomorye community went on flourishing for a very long time after their death, throughout the second half of the 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century.

Starting from 1827 under Nicholas I a systematic persecution was brought to bear on all Old Ritualists, which sadly affected the Pomorye community. In 1836 it was forbidden to call itself a distinct community and to acquire immovable goods, in 1837 to possess and ring church bells, in 1841 to repair monasteries and places of worship and to have crosses on the latter. Finally in 1854 instructions were issued to close down all Old Ritualist chapels and monasteries in the Pomorye and to deport a proportion of the Old Ritualist population.

The Theodosian Old Ritualists

This grouping received its name from that of its first organizer, Feodisii Vasilyev (d. 1711), who was initially a member of the Pomorye community. The early history of the grouping he founded is rather meager.

Throughout the whole of the 18th century members of this group were to be found in many places ; the Preobrazhenski cemetery in Moscow became the centre of the Theodosians. This settlement at the Preobrazhenski cemetery arose in 1771 during the plague which was raging at that time in Moscow. A Moscow Theodosian named Ilya Kovylin (d. 1809) established, at his own expense, a place of quarantine on an isolated plot of ground where he built huts for the lodging of the sick. All Theodosians who lived in Moscow were gathered here to serve the sick. For these they provided good food and care; for the dying—spiritual comfort, for the dead—a funeral service and burial in the cemetery. The common people, dying of hunger and disease, flocked to the Theodosians. Kovylin saw each individually and conveyed to each that these misfortunes were sent down upon them as a punishment for the ‘Nikonian faith’ which he advised them to renounce. Those who were willing were re-baptised on the spot and received into the community. With the ending of the plague Kovylin set about the external and internal organization of the community at the Preobrazhenski cemetery. A chapel was built and furnished with ancient icons, numbers of stone buildings for dwelling or storage purposes were built, and male and female communities of communal life were set up. Kovylin gave the Preobrazhenski community a monastic character ; he established a particular discipline to be observed in the chapel and refectory ; he fixed a special dress for men and for women, and he decided that only a fasting diet should be provided. The office of Superior was, by common firm consent, filled by Kovylin himself. In 1808 Kovylin decided to give a firm and stable basis to the life of the Preobrazhenski Old Ritualist community and composed special rules to that end which he managed to get enforced. Kovylin provided a great deal of help to all Theodosian communities beyond the bounds of Moscow. In these communities teachers were installed only with a confirmation from Kovylin, receiving from him a document to that purpose. The significance of Kovylin and the Preobrazhenski community he founded was very great. As the Old Ritualist writer Pavel Lyubopytni put it, Kovylin was ‘in the Church a Patriarch and in the world a lord of peace’. For many years the Preobrazhenski cemetery was the centre for almost all Theodosian communities.

The Philippian Old Ritualists (Filippovtsi)

This group got their name from their first leader, the monk Philip who began as a member of the Pomorye community. When this community

was in 1738 compelled to introduce into its services a prayer for the civil power, Philip, in his distress at this, abandoned the Pomorye community with the words, 'the Christian faith has fallen' and set up his own. In 1743 Philip, to avoid falling into the hands of a detachment of soldiers that had been sent after him, burned himself alive together with approximately 70 of his followers. By reason of their strict observance of ecclesiastical rules and customs the Philippians were called by other Old Ritualists 'the strong Christians'.

The Wandering Pilgrims

This group appeared in the last quarter of the 18th century. Its founder was a Philippian named Yevphimi (d.1792). According to their teaching Anti-Christ ruled over this world, not spiritually as the majority of Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists held, but visibly, in the succession of Russian Tsars, beginning with Peter I.

The visible signs of the power of Anti-Christ were the regulations of the civil power. That being so, the Wandering Pilgrims refused every form of civil obedience; they would neither pay taxes, do military service, take any oath, nor accept a passport. So as to avoid association with Anti-Christ and to achieve salvation, the true Christian had to break every link with the society over which Anti-Christ ruled and become a wandering pilgrim, that is, a perpetual vagrant. Given that in practice the fulfillment of this demand was bound to deprive the group of stability and, indeed, of any future, certain changes were introduced into this teaching. The Wandering Pilgrims began to accept into their ranks not only those who actually went 'underground' and lived as wanderers but also those who vowed to do this but stayed at home. This last category was entitled 'the refuge-keepers' or 'the receivers of pilgrims'. They gave shelter and supplied all the needs of the authentic Wandering Pilgrims, concealing them in various kinds of hide-outs. Towards the end of his life a 'Receiver' would fulfill his initial vow and become an authentic Wandering Pilgrim.

'Only God Knows', the 'No-Men' or 'The Saviour's Consent' Group (Netovtsi)

As was said above, the Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists, by reason of their lack of an hierarchical priesthood, allowed laymen to conduct services and administer certain sacraments. But to certain Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists this seemed a sacrilege, a usurpation of rights that could not belong to any laymen.

According to their convictions, once there were no longer any true priests, there could no longer be either communal services or sacraments ; grace had been taken up into Heaven. This negation that characterized them, won for them the name of 'No-men', in Russian, 'Netovtsi'. An alternative title of 'the Saviour's Consent' was also given to them because, to the question of 'How can a man receive salvation without either sacraments or communal service ?' they would answer 'That is known to the Saviour alone ; a man must put his trust in His mercy and pray'.

In the course of time the 'No-men' broke up into smaller groupings. The cause of this division was the question of baptism. The Christian faith imposes before all else, as an indispensable condition of salvation, 'birth by water and the Spirit'. Their renunciation of the sacrament of baptism laid the 'No-men' open to the charge that they had no right to call themselves Christians. They therefore, in order not to compromise their fundamental doctrine concerning a layman's incapacity to administer the sacraments and hold a service, worked out a highly particularized solution to this difficult problem. Some of them recognized the administration of baptism within the Greco-Russian Church, alleging that 'even if it is a heretic who baptizes, he is still a priest in his vestments and not a simple peasant'. Others took a different way out, deciding that it was possible to baptize oneself at any rate, to which end they modified the baptismal formula to 'I, the servant of God, baptize myself'. Those who took this course were called the 'Self-Baptizers'.

The 'Self-Baptizers' had a number of offshoots, for example, the 'Hole-men', and the 'Rowan-men'.³

The distinguishing mark of the 'Hole-men' was their teaching regarding icons. While not denying reverence to icons in principle, they held that nobody should pray before ancient icons (because these were defiled) nor before new icons (because there were no priests to bless them). A man therefore simply had to pray, turning himself directly towards the east. Normally members of this group made a hole in the eastern wall of their huts, and, when they desired to pray, they would take off the covering of the hole and say their prayers looking through it to the east. That is the origin of their name, the 'Hole-men'.

The 'Rowan-Men' acknowledged only the use of crosses with no image of the Saviour on them (on the grounds that he was taken down from the

³ "Dyrniki" and "Ryabinovtsi" respectively.

Cross), and made exclusively of Rowan wood because in Holy Scripture, as they interpret it, that is the wood referred to by the word 'pyevg'.

The Popovtsi Old Ritualists

This group, as was said above, finding themselves without bishops, were forced to receive into their ranks 'popes', that is, priests who came over to them from the Greco-Russian Church; these priests administered the sacraments and conducted services. This took place toward the end of the 17th century when the Old Ritualists had very few of their own priests left. There were 'Popovtsi' centres on the Don, at Kerzhenets, on the Vyetka (in the region of Gomel) near Starodubye, and from the second half of the 18th century at Irgiz (in the Saratov region) and at the Rogozhskoye cemetery in Moscow.

Internal disputes arising among the 'Popovtsi' Old Ritualists, together with the appearance of their own episcopate, divided them into distinct and independent groups, though with not very much distance between them. The principal topic of dispute was the question of the acceptance into orders of the priests who came over to them from the Greco-Russian church. These disputes divided the 'Popovtsi' Old Ritualists into the 'Re-anointers' (Peremazantsi) who received these priests with a second ordination ceremony — these were the great majority — and the 'Diaconals' (Diakonovtsi) who received them with a third ceremony, that is, one of renunciation of heresy — these constituted an insignificant minority in the total of 'Popovtsi' Old Ritualists.

The Diaconals originated around Kerzhenets in the first quarter of the 18th century and thereafter spread to Starodubye. Their founder was the Deacon Alexander (d.1720). The distinguishing marks of this group were as follows :

1. The recognition that the four-pointed cross was as authentic a representation of the Saviour's Cross as the eight-pointed.
2. The recognition of a variant form of the 'Jesus Prayer' that included the words 'Our God', thus : 'O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, be merciful to me a sinner'. The only formula recognized as authentic by all other Old Ritualists was : 'O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, be merciful to me a sinner'.
3. Incensing in the form of a cross : that means one forward swing of the censer, followed by one crossways, whereas other Old Ritualists made two forward swings of the censer, followed by one crossways.

4. The imposition of a third ceremony, namely, that of renunciation of a heresy, on the priests that came over to them from the Greco-Russian Church.

In the first quarter of the 19th century another group broke away, that called 'Luzhkovskoye' after its place of origin, Luzhka. It arose because the government issued an ukase (decree) on the 26th March 1822 which allowed the Popovtsi Old Ritualists to receive into their ranks any priests who came over to them from the Russian Orthodox Church, but on the condition that these priests were officially registered. This governmental concession was greeted with joy by the majority of Popovtsi Old Ritualists but roused the deep suspicion of those living in the village of Luzhka in Starodubiye. The latter decided that only the earlier priesthood that had existed and acted in concealment from both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities was the true and legal priesthood when the Church itself was forced to live in hiding. As for those priests who accepted permission and authorization from the government to perform their duties, by that very act they forfeited their character as authentic priests and placed themselves on the same level as the Russian Orthodox clergy, the more so in that they had to be officially registered in the same way as the Russian Orthodox clergy. That being so, the Luzhka Old Ritualists (Luzhkovtsi) decided to go on receiving into their community those priests who came over to them in secret and to take no steps to have them officially registered.

The Byelaya Krinitza Episcopate

Acknowledging the truth of the saying that 'the Church cannot exist without a bishop', the Popovtsi Old Ritualists had from earliest times longed to acquire a bishop of their own who could ordain priests for Old Ritualist communities who were members of the communities by origin. From earliest times there had circulated among them all sorts of rumours about the existence, in unknown far-off lands, of 'Ancient Orthodox' bishops who had never accepted the Nikonian innovations. Attempts were organized to seek out these bishops, but all came to nothing. Thereupon it was decided to find within the Greco-Russian church a bishop willing either to consecrate an episcopal candidate presented by the Old Ritualists, or to come over to them himself. A first attempt was made in 1730 by the Old Ritualists living on the Vyetka and around Starodubiye. They asked the Orthodox Metropolitan

Anthony of Yassi to give them a bishop. Metropolitan Anthony, knowing very little about the Old Ritualist schism, consented and the monk Pavel, bursar of the Pokrovski monastery on the Vyetka, was sent to Yassi as an episcopal candidate. But Metropolitan Anthony procrastinated and on the 5th March 1731 the Old Ritualists presented a new petition to the Patriarch of Constantinople, Paisios II, who had just arrived in Yassi ; their cause was simultaneously submitted to his judgement by Metropolitan Anthony himself. Patriarch Paisios expressed his willingness to do as they asked, provided only that the bishop placed over them took an oath of faithfulness to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, meaning by that the Greco-Russian. The Old Ritualists found it impossible to accept this condition and for that reason the whole business came to nothing. This initial failure only made them all the more anxious to have a bishop of their own.

In the second half of the 18th century the Popovtsi Old Ritualists presented a similar petition to the Georgian Archbishop Afanasii. They also invited a number of Russian bishops to come over to them, including Bishop Tikhon of Voronezh, a man famous for his holiness of life. Finally, at the end of the 18th century they appealed to the Russian civil authorities for permission to receive among them an archbishop on the same conditions as those on which they received priests who came over to them, but with the proviso that he should be absolutely independent of the Orthodox hierarchy, should have his own curia and enjoy all those rights conceded to persons of alien religions who li pəlin Russia. Only when this appeal failed did the Popovtsi Old Ritualists temporarily abandon their plan to get a bishop. They gave up relatively easily because at that time they were in no urgent need of priests. But later, when the 'drying-up' of the priesthood was felt more keenly, the ancient longing was once more experienced ; this time it was satisfied in full.

This fulfilment came about in the following way. In 1832, under Tsar Nicholas I, an ukase was issued forbidding all Old Ritualist communities hence-forth to receive runaway priests. Moreover measures were taken to put an end to the possibility of such priests running away. These measures led to a sharp drop in the number of priests in all Old Ritualist communities. Dreading a complete 'drying-up' of the priesthood in their communities, the Old Ritualists petitioned the government to restore the licence granted to them by the 1822 ukase, whereby priests could go over to them freely. When this petition was rejected, they decided to get a bishop of their own.

To achieve this purpose the influential St. Petersburg Old Ritualist, Sergei Gromov sought a qualified man and found him in Peter Vyelikodvorski. This man, distinguished by perseverance, was to become famous in the world of the Old Ritualists as the monk Pavel Byelokrinitiski (1808-1854).

In 1835 it was proposed that Pavel should go in search of an 'Ancient Orthodox' bishop. In 1836 Pavel, together with a friend, the monk Gerontii of the Syerkovski monastery in Bessarabia, made his way to the frontiers of Persia. But at Kutaisi the two monks were arrested by the police and sent back home under escort. This first failure in no way affected the enthusiasm of Pavel and Gerontii for their cause.

In the early spring of 1839 they once again set off to travel abroad. They crossed the Austrian frontier into Bukovina and halted in the principal Old Ritualist settlement, Byelaya Krinitisa, where they stayed in the small monastery attached to it. The Austrian Old Ritualists had received from the Emperor Joseph II as early as 1783 a 'privilege' according to which they enjoyed full religious liberty, including the right to their own clergy. Once he had heard this, Pavel realized that on this basis the Old Ritualists would be able to petition the Austrian Government for permission to have a bishop too. Thus the place of residence for a future Old Ritualist Archbishop had been found.

Having swung the Old Ritualists round to this view, Pavel and Gerontii began their approaches to the Austrian government; these cost them much time and energy but in the end success was achieved. On the 6th of September, 1844, the Emperor Ferdinand signed a decree, granting the Old Ritualists permission to bring back from abroad (providing that it was not from Russia), a bishop of their own to ordain whatsoever clergy they needed and to reside in the monastery of Byelaya Krinitisa. Thereupon Pavel, leaving Gerontii at the monastery to prepare the episcopal see, set off with the monk Alimpii in search of an 'Ancient Orthodox' bishop. After they had searched the Slavonic lands (Dalmatia, Slavonia, Montenegro and Serbia), in vain, Pavel and Alimpii set off towards the east in 1845. Their journey lay through Moldavia, and while they were at Yassi, the local Old Ritualists recommended to them a retired archbishop living there, Metropolitan Veniamin. He was approached but to no avail.

Pavel and Alimpii journeyed through Palestine, Syria and Egypt; nowhere did they find an 'Ancient Orthodox' bishop. Indeed Pavel had

had small hopes of this ; his reason for travelling there was twofold :
(i) so as to be able to give a conclusively negative answer to those Old Ritualists who believed in the existence of 'Ancient Orthodox' bishops :
(ii) so as to observe for himself what form of baptism was employed by the Christians of those regions, baptism by triple immersion or by infusion, because the whole question of the Old Ritualists' ability to accept a bishop was bound up with the form of baptism.

It was Constantinople that Pavel had in view because many bishops lived there who had been deprived of sees. Already on his first visit to Constantinople, when on his way to Syria, Pavel had established relations with certain Polish emigrants who advised him to have recourse to these bishops, deprived of their dioceses at the whim of the Turkish authorities, and they promised to make all necessary inquiries before he returned from his journey. And indeed, when he got back to Constantinople, they had two bishops of whom to tell him. One of them (called by some sources Kirillos, Cyril), could not be persuaded to come over to the Old Ritualists ; the other was Metropolitan Ambrosios of Sarayev in Bosnia (1791-1863).

In 1835 Ambrosios had been raised by the Patriarch to the rank of Metropolitan and nominated to the see of Sarayev in Bosnia. Metropolitan Ambrosios was the best of the Greek bishops appointed to Bosnia ; he was kind, uninterested in personal gain, concerned for his oppressed flock. These traits brought him into conflict with the Turkish authorities. On their instigation he was recalled to Constantinople in 1841 to be added to the number of bishops living there without a see, eking out a wretched life and subject to every kind of humiliation and privation. The position of Metropolitan Ambrosios was all the more painful, in that he had a married son who lived with him in permanent unemployment.

A Serb named Ognianovich, who knew both Russian and Greek, acted as an intermediary and through him Pavel entered into negotiations with Metropolitan Ambrosios. Both in conversation and in carefully framed writings, Pavel presented the beliefs of Old Ritualists in such a light that going over to them did not appear to Ambrosios a betrayal of Orthodoxy. The Metropolitan was concerned that he might be guilty of such betrayal, but, in fact, given the nature of the case, this did not occur since the Popovtsi Old Ritualists preserved the Orthodox faith whole and entire. After certain hesitations Metropolitan Ambrosios gave his consent to join the Old Ritualists. On the 15/16th April 1846

an agreement was signed by both sides, according to which Metropolitan Ambrosios undertook to go over to the Old Ritualists as their Metropolitan, to live the full monastic life with all observances and to consecrate a successor to himself. For their part the Old Ritualists undertook to maintain Metropolitan Ambrosios in a style suitable to his office and to give material assistance to his son.

On his arrival in Vienna, Metropolitan Ambrosios (in Russian, Amvrosii) was received in audience, together with the monk Pavel, by the Emperor Ferdinand. Metropolitan Ambrosios presented a petition that he should be confirmed in the title of 'Supreme Pastor of the communities of Old Believers'.

On the 12th October 1846, Metropolitan Ambrosios arrived at Byelaya Krinitsa ; the Old Ritualists gave him a triumphant welcome and on the 28th admitted him to their community with a second rite, that is, with an anointing.

In order to guarantee for the future the existence of an Old Ritualist hierarchy with the three traditional grades (bishop, priest, deacon), Metropolitan Ambrosios had now, in accordance with the agreement, to consecrate a coadjutor bishop with right of succession to himself. A candidate was indicated by lot, a lector (reader) of Byelaya Krinitsa named Kiprian Timofeyev whose monastic name was Kirill. Timofeyev, after receiving the minor orders, was ordained on the 6th of January 1847 as Bishop of Minos, one of the remote Old Ritualist settlements in Turkey, and as coadjutor, had the right of succession to the Metropolitan see of Byelaya Krinitsa.

In August 1847 Metropolitan Ambrosios acceded to a request of the Old Ritualists in Turkey and consecrated another bishop, Arkadii (d.1859), to the see of Slava. In December 1847, at the request of the Russian government, Metropolitan Ambrosios was recalled to Vienna and thence sent into exile at the town of Tsill, dying there in 1863.

After the removal of Metropolitan Ambrosios the affairs of the Metropolitan see of Byelaya Krinitsa were in the hands of his coadjutor, Bishop Kirill, who was promoted on the 4th January 1849 to the rank of Metropolitan. His primary task was to ensure the survival and spread of the Byelaya Krinitsa hierarchy among the Old Ritualists, both within Russia and outside. For those within Russia, a whole series of bishops were consecrated, among whom Archbishop Anthony of Moscow (Shutov, d.1881) who won particular distinction by his labours. Archbishop Anthony established no less than twelve dioceses in Russia.

In this way the regular Old Ritualist hierarchy was set up. The Byelaya Krinitsa hierarchy gathered under its wing two-thirds of all Old Ritualists and became the largest and best organized Old Ritualist Church in Russia. Its principal centre there was the Rogozhskoye cemetery in Moscow, which arose, like the Preobrazhenskoye one, in the plague year of 1771.

The 'Single Faith' or the 'One Faith' Old Ritualists

The principal form of reconciliation of Old Ritualists with the Russian Orthodox Church was the so-called 'One Faith' movement ('Yedinovyeriye'), that arose in the last quarter of the 18th century. By this reconciliation, Old Ritualists who wanted to rejoin the Russian Orthodox Church and be provided with priests were allowed to conduct services and maintain rites in the form that had obtained before Patriarch Nikon. This 'One Faith' movement was relatively successful; at the beginning of the 20th century it was estimated that there were 600 parishes of this type.

Old Ritualists today

Russian Old Ritualists at the present consist of the following three principal Churches: (i) the Old Ritualist Archbishopric of Moscow and all Russia: (ii) the Old Ritualist Archbishopric of Ancient Orthodox Christians of Novozybkov, Moscow and all Russia: (iii) the Old Ritualist Church, lacking any regular hierarchy (the Bespopovtsi).

The first of these traces its origins to the Byelaya Krinitsa hierarchy whose foundations were laid by the Greek Metropolitan Ambrosios who joined the Old Ritualists in 1846. The Archbishopric is divided into four episcopal sees and has up to 200 parishes under the spiritual care of priests. The Old Ritualist parishes of the Archbishopric are concentrated primarily in the following regions: Moscow, Rostov, Gorki, Volgograd, Tomsk and Novosibirsk, and also in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. The main centre of the Archbishopric is the Rogozhskoye cemetery in Moscow; the Pokrovski church there, built in 1791 and richly furnished with magnificent icons of the ancient Russian style, is its cathedral.

The Archbishopric's dogmatic teaching is Orthodox, based on Holy Scripture, the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the works of the Fathers of the Church. Seven sacraments are acknowledged: baptism (administer-

ed only by triple immersion), confirmation, penance, communion, marriage, the anointing of the sick, and holy orders. Services are conducted from ancient printed books, published before the time of Patriarch Nikon or else reprinted from those editions that were, and there is a strict observance of all rites and customs of the ecclesiastical observance that existed in the Russian Orthodox Church before the reforms of Patriarch Nikon. The hierarchy has the traditional three grades of bishop, priest and deacon. Instruction in the conducting of services is given by practical experience. The major problems of the ecclesiastical life of the Archdiocese are considered and decided by Councils, with representatives of clergy and laity alike taking part.

The Old Ritualist Archbishopric of Ancient Orthodox Christians of Novozybkov, Moscow and all Russia, first made its appearance as a Church with a regular hierarchy in 1923. A relatively small proportion of the Popovtsi Old Ritualists refused to recognize the Byelaya Krinitza regular hierarchy; they had doubts concerning the manner of Metropolitan Ambrosios's baptism (whether it had been by triple immersion) and the correctness of the ceremony of his reception, and furthermore considered the ordination of his coadjutor and successor, which he had performed alone, to be uncanonical.

These Popovtsi Old Ritualists therefore separated and went on receiving priests who came over to them from the Russian Orthodox Church, but they did not renounce the hope of one day acquiring a bishop of their own. In 1923 Nikolai, archbishop of Saratov, came over to them from the 'Renewal' schism (the 'Obnovlyeniye' movement); they received him into their community, where he is known under the Old Ritualist form of his name, Nikola. Archbishop Nikola was the first head of the Old Ritualist Church of Ancient Orthodox Christians (1924-34). In 1929-30 there came over to this Church the Bishop of Sverdlovsk, Stefan, of the Moscow Patriarchate; he later became the second head of the Archbishopric, ruling from 1934-1937. According to the canon law of the Orthodox Church, two bishops have the right to consecrate a new bishop. In this way these Old Ritualists acquired their own autonomous episcopate.

The centre of this Archbishopric was originally Saratov, then Moscow, Kuibyshev and, finally, Novozybkov where the Spas-Preobrazhenski church, built in 1909, is their cathedral. Their dogmatic teaching is Orthodox, seven sacraments are acknowledged, and services are conducted

according to ancient books and rites, as was done in the Russian Orthodox Church before the reforms of Patriarch Nikon.

The ecclesiastical hierarchy has the traditional three grades : bishop, priest, deacon. Training in how to conduct services is also given by practical experience.

The Archbishopric has 19 parishes in various regions of the USSR and abroad, in Rumania and Bulgaria. These are in the charge of priests or bishops. The supreme legislative authority of the Old Ritualist Church of Ancient Orthodox Christians is the Council. Attached to the Archbishop is a Supreme Spiritual Council, consisting of five persons, mainly bishops.

The Old Ritualist Church without any regular hierarchy includes within itself all persuasions of Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists : Pomortsi, Theodosians, Philippians. Within the USSR it is estimated that there are 285 communities. Most of these are concentrated around the Baltic coast (139) and Byelorussia (35) ; there are also communities in Poland, the USA and Brasil. In recent times a movement has arisen to reunite all these Old Ritualist communities of diverse traditions. In Vilnius (Lithuanian SSR) there is a Supreme Old Ritualist Committee to which all communities of Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists in Lithuania are administratively subject (56). In co-operation with the other principal communities the Supreme Old Ritualist Committee edits the ecclesiastical calendar and service books. In the absence of hierarchy, the communities of Bespopovtsi Old Ritualists are, for all spiritual purposes, headed by Teachers who are also responsible for conducting services. For administrative purposes each community is under a president, elected at a general meeting.

The dogmatic teaching of this group is on the whole Orthodox, although some extremes were brought about by historical development. There is no hierarchy, so no more than two sacraments can be administered : baptism and penance. The form of service and all other rites are pre-Nikon, but their performance is conditioned by the absence of priests ; thus, for example, there is no liturgy.

Recent Developments

From the very beginning of the split many theologians in the Russian Orthodox Church felt that the decisions and anathemas of the Councils of 1656 and 1667 should be understood not as anathemas against old

rituals, customs and liturgical books, but as condemnations of persons, who contributed to and created the atmosphere leading to the split. In 1906 the Preparatory Commission for the Council of the Russian Church decided to recommend to this Council the abolishment of all condemnations and anathemas in connection with the split with the Old Believers. The Council of 1917/18 made such a declaration. On the basis of this declaration the Holy Synod, under the chairmanship of the patriarchal *locum tenens* Metropolitan Sergius, declared in April 1929 the abolishment of anathemas and condemnations. The Council of the Russian Church (May 30 to June 3, 1971), which elected the new Patriarch after the death of Patriarch Alexij, issued a special decree in a solemn and formal way

a) recognizing the old rituals, customs and old liturgical books, which are used by Old Believers, as having the same saving meaning as the present ones used in the Russian Orthodox Church ;

b) abolishing all condemnations and anathemas against the liturgical rites and the practice of Old Believers, and declaring the anathemas of the Moscow Councils of 1656 and 1667 as non-existent, having no canonical validity now.

VII

THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

This essay is intended to serve as an introduction to the Church of the Nazarene for any interested parties in the membership of the World Council of Churches. It is necessarily sketchy and deals only with certain aspects of the history and witness of the people called Nazarenes. A more complete picture can be obtained by consulting the volumes listed in the bibliography. Here the plan is to present a brief account of the modern holiness movement where the Church of the Nazarene had its genesis, followed by sections on Nazarene beginnings, general characteristics, Nazarene distinctives, and Nazarenes and other Christians. It is hoped that this sketch may serve the member churches of the World Council of Churches and at the same time be considered a fair representation by Nazarenes themselves.

The Holiness Movement

The origins of the Church of the Nazarene are in the holiness movement which arose after the American Civil War. The distinctive teaching of the movement was that subsequent to the experience of regeneration or forgiveness of sins, there was the baptism with the Holy Spirit by which one's motive life was cleansed and one was empowered to live a holy life. Benjamin B. Warfield traces the beginnings of "perfectionism" in America to the Quakers. (The term "holiness" is often preferred to the word "perfectionism".) But it was the Methodist message of "entire sanctification" which made the major contribution to the movement. Most of the outstanding exponents of holiness were Methodists or were indebted to Methodism to some degree.¹

The roots of the holiness movement reach back into the early decades of the 19th century. Considerable evidence suggests that holiness, or the holy life, did not occupy a chief place in early Methodist preaching in America, despite the efforts of Bishop Asbury to impress it upon his followers. The needs of the frontier directed attention to the more

¹ JACK FORD, *In the Steps of John Wesley : The Church of the Nazarene in Britain* (Kansas City : Nazarene Publishing House, 1968), p. 11.

elemental work of securing the conversion of sinners.² But the literature devoted to holiness increased rapidly after 1825, and in 1832 the bishops' pastoral address to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church called for a revival of holiness.³ In 1835 Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, wife of a young New York physician, began to conduct her famous "Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness". She was instrumental in leading hundreds of Methodist ministers, including two bishops and two who were (later) elected to the office, to claim the grace.⁴ Charles G. Finney and Asa Mahan, founders of the Oberlin School, accepted the Wesleyan doctrine with modifications and strongly insisted on Christians' seeking a higher work of grace. The two preachers "ranged the cities of two continents preaching the power of the union of man's will and God's grace to consecrate and sanctify every believing soul".⁵ In 1858, the year of revival which saw more than 500,000 converts, William E. Boardman published his book *The Higher Christian Life*, which sold about 200,000 copies on both sides of the Atlantic. Boardman sought to make the experience of holiness or entire sanctification more appealing to all denominations by describing it in terms which neither Methodist nor Oberlin preachers had used before.

In 1867, the first general holiness camp meeting was held in Vineland, New Jersey, from which came the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness. Although the Association was interdenominational in character, it was predominantly Methodist. Prominently associated with it were Boston University professor Daniel Steele and Bishops L. L. Hamline, Matthew Simpson, Thomas A. Morris and Jesse T. Peck. In 1886, Bishop Mallalieu could write that more than at any time in the history of Methodism God's people were seeking the blessing of the pure heart.

Because of various forces which were at work in the period, the holiness movement overflowed to all the major denominations; even certain "evangelical" Unitarians were affected.⁶ Congregationalists like Finney, Mahan and A. M. Hills; Presbyterians like Boardman and Pearsall Smith; Quakers like David B. Updegraff, Prof. Dougan Clark, and

² TIMOTHY L. SMITH, *Revivalism and Social Reform* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 115. See also John L. Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 97-101.

³ SMITH, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

⁴ TIMOTHY L. SMITH, *Called Unto Holiness: The Story of the Nazarenes — The Formative Years* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1962), p. 12.

⁵ SMITH, *Revivalism*, p. 112.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-113, 135-147.

Hannah Whitall Smith ; Baptists like A. B. Earle, J. Q. Adams, A. P. Graves, George Morse and E. M. Levy; and the outstanding Episcopalian layman, Dr. Charles C. Cullis, gave the movement breadth.⁷ When a national conference of Congregational churches met at Oberlin in 1873, the aged Finney was asked to preach on the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. The same year D. L. Moody, who in 1871 had experienced the Baptism, opened his famous meetings in London, which made his name a household word on two continents. The prominence and success of Finney and Moody “gave added significance to their experience and made it all the more desirable”.⁸

Writing in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* in 1873, Lewis R. Dunn declared that Episcopalians, Quakers, Presbyterians and Baptists were forsaking sectarian controversy to proclaim with their Methodist brethren the purifying grace.⁹ In 1888, Hannah Whitall Smith wrote her famous book *The Christian Secret of a Happy Life*. At that time at least four publishing houses were engaged exclusively in publishing holiness journals, and 27 holiness periodicals were circulating. By 1892, the number of periodicals had grown to 41.

The movement spread to England. In addition to the popularity of the writings of Finney, Boardman, Phoebe Palmer and others, Finney had made two memorable visits to England. After the revival of 1858, the Palmers spent four years among English Methodists, preaching to packed houses in Sheffield, Manchester, Birmingham and dozens of other places. Following this James Caughey carried on the crusade and reported over 10,000 converts. Timothy L. Smith writes :

“Thereafter, British Methodists championed sanctification more unanimously than their American cousins. When John Inskip and William Macdonald arrived in 1881, both the ‘General Committee’ of the Primitive Methodist Church and prominent Wesleyan pastors welcomed their work. At Leeds, they saw scores of ministers profess the experience. Thirteen hundred were converted in one service”.¹⁰

Meanwhile Asa Mahan and Dougan Clark preached to English Congregationalists and Friends, while Boardman, Moody, and the Pearsall Smiths prepared the way for the famous Keswick Convention in England,

⁷ FORD, *op. cit.*, pp. 12 f.

⁸ JAMES D. G. DUNN, “Spirit-Baptism and Pentecostalism”, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (November 1970), 400. Dunn notes that W. H. Daniels’ *D. L. Moody and His Work* publicised the news of Moody’s Spirit-Baptism, contributing to the popularity of the teaching.

⁹ SMITH, *Called Unto Holiness*, pp. 22 f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

formed in 1875. William Booth was led into holiness by Caughey and shortly thereafter withdrew from the Methodists to form the Salvation Army. The Army is still a holiness movement.

“Thus from Vineland Camp to Keswick and the London world conference of Methodism and back again to Boston, New York and Chicago did the fires of the holiness revival burn.

Finney, Boardman, and Phoebe Palmer had kindled the hopes of an idealistic age. The doctrine of entire sanctification, like the crusades against slavery, drunkenness, and pauperism, appealed to a widespread confidence that all the world’s evil could be done away.

“The holiness movement was born of great revivals. It prospered from the newly-employed energies of laymen and women preachers. And it was in large measure centered in the cities. . .

“Nevertheless, . . . the rapid pace of social change soon created conditions in urban Christianity which led to a conflict over holiness. . . The outcome, after a brief struggle, was the organization of a dozen new Wesleyan denominations, of which the Church of the Nazarene was to become perhaps the most significant”.¹¹

Nazarene Beginnings

It would be false to suggest that the preaching of holiness received unanimous support during the revival, even in Methodism. A hard core of resistance had always been present, and this intensified as the century drew to a close.

“Increasingly, the people who had espoused the doctrine, which was never meant to be a ‘theological provincialism’, found themselves unwelcome in their parent denominations. With agapeic hesitancy, but with New Testament poignancy, they formed small denominations. Three of these ‘pilot projects’, in 1908, formed the Church of the Nazarene — which has since that time welcomed under their wings several denominations”.¹²

The General Assembly of 1923 officially declared the origin of the denomination to be the union of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene with the Holiness Church of Christ at Pilot Point, Texas, on October 8, 1908.¹³ A year prior to this the Association of Pentecostal Churches, an eastern

¹¹ SMITH, *Called Unto Holiness*, p. 26.

¹² WILLIAM M. GREATHOUSE, *Nazarene Theology in Perspective* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1970), pp. 5 f.

¹³ *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1923), par. 467; J. B. Chapman, *A History of the Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1926), p. 33.

denomination, had united with the Church of the Nazarene, which had originated in Los Angeles, to form the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene.

The Association of Pentecostal Churches in America. On July 21, 1887, F. A. Hillery led in the organization of the People's Evangelical Church in Providence, R.I. By 1890 this Church had made connections with like-minded groups in New England and formed the Central Evangelical Holiness Association, which was Wesleyan in doctrine but congregational in polity.

In 1894, William H. Hoople and Charles BeVier formed the interdenominational New York Holiness Association. In 1895 H. F. Reynolds joined the Association, and in 1896 Hoople, BeVier and Reynolds reorganized it as the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America.

In November 1896, Hillery's group and the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America voted to unite under the latter name. Within ten years the new denomination had a number of congregations on the eastern seaboard and as far west as Iowa.

The Church of the Nazarene. While the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America was developing in the East, Dr. Phineas F. Bresee's Church of the Nazarene was growing rapidly in the West.

In 1883 Bresee was appointed pastor of First Methodist Church in Los Angeles and in 1886, of Pasadena First Methodist. In 1891 Bishop Mallalieu appointed him presiding elder of the Los Angeles district and encouraged him to promote holiness revivals throughout the district. The following year, however, a new bishop opposed to holiness came into jurisdiction, and Bresee found himself in sudden disfavour. In 1895, he reluctantly withdrew from the ministry of the Church which had given him his opportunity to serve and honoured him with many privileges.

On October 6, 1895, Bresee began services in a building on Main Street in Los Angeles, and announced that a new denomination was being organized to provide a full salvation Church for the poor. His close friend Dr. J. P. Widney, previously dean of the medical college and later president of the University of Southern California, became co-founder of the new denomination and gave it the name "Church of the Nazarene" as indicating the lowliness of Jesus and his association with "the toiling . . . sorrowing heart of the world".¹⁴ Bresee and Widney were later elected general superintendents.

¹⁴ SMITH, *Called Unto Holiness*, p. 111.

By 1906 Nazarene congregations dotted the western seaboard and spread as far eastward as Illinois.

The First Union. From 1903, when C. W. Ruth of the Church of the Nazarene met Hoople and Reynolds of the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America, the two churches gravitated toward union, which was eventually consummated four years later. Details of union were hammered out in preliminary meetings held in 1906 and 1907 in Los Angeles and in Brooklyn, but the actual formation of the "Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene" did not officially take place until the "First General Assembly" held in Chicago in October 1907.

The Holiness Church of Christ. This was a southern denomination formed by the union of the New Testament Church of Christ and the Independent Holiness Church. The former group had begun under the ministry of R. L. Harris in 1894 at Milan, Tennessee, and subsequently spread through Arkansas and Texas. The Independent Holiness Church was the product of the Texas holiness movement dating back to 1888. Under the leadership of C. B. Jernigan these two churches came together at Pilot Point, Texas, in 1905, to form the Holiness Church of Christ.

The Second Union. At the invitation of the Holiness Church of Christ the second General Assembly of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene convened in Pilot Point, Texas, on October 8, 1908. There the two bodies voted unanimously to unite, taking the name "Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene". At Pilot Point the history of the Church of the Nazarene as it exists today begins.¹⁵ However, "the General Assembly of 1919, in response to memorials from thirty-five District Assemblies, changed the name of the organization to 'Church of the Nazarene'" (*Manual of the Church of the Nazarene*, 1919, p. 16).

Others Unions. In 1915 the Pentecostal Mission in Tennessee and the Pentecostal Church of Scotland joined ranks with the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. The Tennessee body brought a number of congregations, "a missionary force of considerable strength, doing work in India, Cuba, and Central America"¹⁶ and Trevecca College. The Mission had begun in 1898 under J. O. McClurkan, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister. The Pentecostal Church of Scotland was the result chiefly of the labours

¹⁵ At the General Assembly of 1919 "Pentecostal" was dropped because by this time the term was too much identified with the emerging Pentecostal movement and with the latter's distinctive emphasis upon *glossolalia*.

¹⁶ *Proceedings of the Fourth General Assembly of the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene*, Kansas City, Sept. 30 to Oct. 11, 1915, p. 50.

of George Sharpe, whose holiness ministry had begun in the Congregational Church in Scotland in 1901.

Under the leadership of J. G. Morrison and V. G. Bennett more than 1,000 members of the Laymen's Holiness Association of the Dakotas, Minnesota and Montana united with the Church of the Nazarene in 1922.

In 1952 the International Holiness Mission, founded in London in 1907 by David Thomas, came into the Church of the Nazarene with 28 churches, over 1,000 constituents, and 36 missionaries in South Africa.

In 1955, under the leadership of Maynard James and Jack Ford, the Calvary Holiness Church of Britain brought 22 churches and over 600 members into the denomination.

The most recent accession was the Gospel Workers Church of Canada which united with the Church of the Nazarene in 1958.

General Characteristics

At the end of 1970 Nazarenes reported a total membership of 490,573, with the prediction that membership would pass the 500,000 mark in 1971. Sunday school enrollment was more than 1,000,000 with an average weekly attendance of 544,706. The church operates missions in 53 world areas with 6,931 ordained elders, and 2,237 licensed ministers in the United States and Great Britain, along with 571 missionaries and 2,620 national ministers elsewhere.

International Headquarters are located in Kansas City, Missouri. Here the Church maintains a graduate theological seminary and a publishing house which, in 1970 printed 680,000 books and almost 75 million pieces of other Christian literature. Here the "Showers of Blessing" broadcast is produced, heard each week on more than 600 stations around the world. Its Spanish counterpart, "La Hora Nazarena", is aired on over 530 stations.

In addition to the seminary the Church supports seven four-year liberal arts colleges, a junior college, and a Bible college in the United States, colleges in Canada, Britain and Japan, a Spanish seminary in San Antonio, Texas, and San José, Costa Rica, and Bible colleges in Australia, Switzerland and South Africa.

Nazarene per capita giving in 1970 was \$221.35. Although tithing is encouraged, it is not a requirement for Church membership.

Nazarene government is representative, a studied compromise between episcopacy and congregationalism. The quadrennial General Assembly

is “the supreme doctrine-expressing, law-making and elective authority of the Church of the Nazarene, subject to the provisions of the Church Constitution”. Its membership is composed of ministers and laymen in equal numbers, elected by the various District Assemblies.

The General Assembly elects a board of six general superintendents who supervise the worldwide work of the Church. It also chooses a 39 member General Board which conducts the business of the Church in the interim between General Assemblies. The General Board is divided into eight departments (World Missions, Home Missions, Evangelism, Education, Church Schools, Youth, Publication, and Ministerial Benevolence). The respective executive secretaries of these departments are elected by the Board as a whole. It also allots the General Budget for the worldwide operation of the denomination.

The General Assembly organizes the membership of the Church into District Assemblies. Local churches elect delegates to the annual District Assembly. Along with the ministers of the district these delegates hear reports, elect a district superintendent and other officers, plan for the work of the district, and set district and general financial apportionments. While the work of each district is directed by a superintendent, his authority “shall not interfere with the independent action of a fully organized church”. Local churches, however, must have the approval of the district superintendent in calling a pastor and in purchasing property and/or building new edifices. While trustees care for the local church property, they hold deeds in trust for the denomination.

Dr. Timothy Smith, historian of the Church, identifies five characteristics of early Nazarenes. These ideals have evolved and developed through nearly three-quarters of a century, but in essence they are still considered, by many, to be identifiable trademarks :

1. “The government of the Church was thoroughly democratic” ;
2. “The chief aim of the Church was to preach holiness to the poor” ;
3. “Its discipline depended primarily on the work of the Holy Spirit” ;
4. “The Church’s creed was brief and made the doctrine of perfect love central” ;
5. “Its worship was joyously free”.¹⁷

¹⁷ SMITH, *Called Unto Holiness*, pp. 112-121. See also Leslie Parrott, *Introducing the Nazarenes* (Kansas City : Nazarene Publishing House, 1969), pp. 13-16.

Nazarene Distinctives

It is the abiding conviction of Nazarenes that God raised them up for a special purpose, namely, to bear witness to the grand truth of Christian perfection. The preamble to the Articles of Faith reads :

“In order that we may preserve our God-given heritage, the faith once delivered to the saints, especially the doctrine and experience of (entire) sanctification as a second work of grace, and also that we may co-operate effectually with other branches of the Church of Jesus Christ in advancing God’s kingdom among men, we, the ministers and laymen in the Church of the Nazarene . . . do hereby . . . set forth . . . the Articles of Faith, to wit . . .”

Then follow the 15 articles : (I) The Triune God, (II) Jesus Christ, (III) The Holy Spirit, (IV) The Holy Scriptures, (V) Original Sin, or Depravity, (VI) Atonement, (VII) Free Agency, (VIII) Repentance, (IX) Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption, (X) Entire Sanctification, (XI) Second Coming of Christ, (XII) Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny, (XIII) Baptism, (XIV) The Lord’s Supper, (XV) Divine Healing.

Within the framework of evangelical Protestant faith Nazarenes declare that their distinguishing tenet is “entire sanctification”, a term which they use interchangeably with “Christian perfection”, “perfect love”, “heart purity”, “the baptism with the Holy Spirit”, “the fullness of the blessing”, and “Christian holiness”.¹⁸

In common with historic Christian faith Nazarenes believe that justification is the gateway to sanctification, that in its broadest sense sanctification is the total process of moral and spiritual renewal which begins at the moment of conversion and continues to glorification. But with John Wesley they believe that within this process there is a second “moment”, a distinct and critical stage of Christian faith and life, when, by the Holy Spirit, God cleanses the believer’s heart from the root of sin and perfects him in love.

Nazarenes count themselves to be inheritors of this truth from Wesley, who received it from the Scriptures and the classic thought of the Church Universal. George C. Cell claims that “the Wesleyan reconstruction of the Christian ethic of life is an original and unique synthesis of the Protestant ethic of grace with the Catholic ethic of holiness”.¹⁹ He

¹⁸ *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City : Nazarene Publishing House, 1968), Art. X, pp. 31 f.

¹⁹ GEORGE CROFT CELL, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley* (New York : Henry Holt & Co., 1935), p. 347.

argues convincingly that the “homesickness of holiness” constitutes “the innermost kernel of Christianity”. The essence of this holiness is Christlikeness, “no more, no less”, such as caught the imagination of St. Francis of Assisi. It was this “lost accent of Christianity” which had fallen into the background of interest in early Protestantism. Cell quotes Harnack’s observation that Lutheranism in its purely religious understanding of the gospel went to such an extreme in its reaction against Roman Catholicism that it neglected too much the moral problem, the “Be ye holy ; for I am holy”. “Right here”, he continues, “Wesley rises to mountain heights. He restored the neglected doctrine of holiness to its merited position in the Protestant understanding of Christianity”.²⁰ The genius of Wesleyan teaching, says Cell, is that it neither confounds nor divorces justification and sanctification but places “equal stress upon the one and the other”.²¹

Nazarenes believe that the two poles of the gospel are: (1) “By grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2 : 8) and (2) “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5 : 48). This perfection they believe to be “perfect love”. But with Wesley they shrink from using the term “sinless perfection”, since the saintliest of Christians “come short of the law of love”.²² Because of their ignorance, even those who have been “made perfect in love” are guilty of what Wesley calls “involuntary transgressions” of God’s perfect law. “It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves as well as for their brethren, ‘Forgive us our trespasses’.”²³ Moreover, “None feel their need of Christ like these ; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself.” Wesley then quotes Christ, “Without [or part from] me ye can do nothing”.²⁴

Nazarenes subscribe to “the Wesleyan paradox” of Christian perfection. The full truth is not gained, they believe, by removing the tension between the two poles (“perfect” — “not yet perfected”, Phil. 3 : 11-15) but by holding these two truths with equal emphasis. “Only thus does the Christian life flower into Christlikeness”.²⁵

²⁰ CELL, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 362.

²² *Works of John Wesley* (Kansas City : Nazarene Publishing House, n.d.), XI, p. 417.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 394-395.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

²⁵ See Greathouse, *Nazarene Theology in Perspective*, pp. 15-24.

Although Christian perfection is the *distinguishing tenet* of Nazarene faith, this tenet is set within a broader theological context which Wm. Greathouse insists is (1) catholic, (2) conservative, and (3) evangelical. It is *catholic* in that it “stands in the classic tradition of Christian thought” and “partakes of the Wesleyan spirit” of tolerance toward those who do not hold similar “opinions”. It is *conservative* rather than fundamentalistic, seeking to avoid a mere “defender of the faith” attitude. It has a high but not a wooden view of biblical inspiration and authority. It is *evangelical* in the respect that it asserts that salvation is not only *sola Scriptura* but also *sola gratia, sola fide*. Nazarene theology subscribes to a doctrine of universal prevenient grace, so that its stress is not upon “free will” but “free grace” — God’s grace which is “free *in all*, and free *for all*” (Wesley).²⁶

With Wesley and Bresee, Nazarenes believe that the only avowals of belief which should be required of their members are “those which are essential to Christian experience”. They are willing to “think and let think” on such matters as the mode of water baptism, and millennial theories relating to the Second Advent, infant baptism, whether or not divine healing is in the Atonement. Their Articles of Faith are deliberately worded in such a way to admit room for difference of emphasis and interpretation, but all within what they consider to be a catholic, conservative and evangelical position.

With respect to *glossolalia*, Nazarenes are agreed in their view that the true evidence of being baptised or filled with the Holy Spirit is ethical love, or the fruit of the Spirit, rather than speaking in tongues. In his article “Spirit-Baptism and Pentecostalism” James G. D. Dunn says that the “key plank in the Pentecostal platform” [is] “that speaking in tongues is the necessary and inevitable evidence of ‘the baptism’” and that it was this view “which set the infant Pentecostal movement apart from the earlier Holiness groups”.²⁷ Leslie Parrott is correct when he writes :

“Nazarenes are not Pentecostal, though many Nazarenes have friends and loved ones in the Pentecostal movement. In fact, the Church of the Nazarene has much more in common with both Calvinists and Pentecostals than with liberal Protestantism. Nazarenes particularly like the ‘heart-warming’ approach to worship and evangelism, the concern for the

²⁶ GREATHOUSE, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-14.

²⁷ DUNN, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 401.

presence of the Holy Spirit, and the love of God's Word which is found among Pentecostals".²⁸

For this reason many Nazarenes like to think that they too belong in what Lesslie Newbigin calls "for want of a better word . . . the Pentecostal" type of Christianity.²⁹ They believe that only as believers are "filled with the Spirit" can they witness for Christ or serve Him effectively. They believe that in this in-filling there is cleansing, devotement to God and empowerment for service.

As to the Christian standard of conduct, Nazarenes believe with Dr. Bresee "that holiness conduct cannot be legislated and thus that 'rules' for membership should be as few as possible. Right living should be the natural outcome of a total commitment of one's life to God."³⁰ Nevertheless, in drawing up its *Manual* the Church adapted Wesley's Methodist society rules in its General and Special Rules. The General Superintendents say of these: "They should be followed carefully and conscientiously as guides and helps to holy living. Those who violate the conscience of the Church do so at their own peril and to the hurt of the witness and fellowship of the Church."³¹ These rules follow closely the injunctions of the ethical sections of the New Testament, but they specifically warn against "the using of alcoholic liquors as a beverage or trafficking therein, . . . using of tobacco in any of its forms . . . the indulging of pride in dress or behaviour . . . songs, literature, and entertainments not to the glory of God, (including) the theatre. . .". It is some of these negatives which critics of the Nazarenes have fastened on as their true "distinctives", whereas Nazarenes themselves view the matter in terms of "the expulsive power of a higher affection".

Nazarenes and Other Christians

The Nazarene position on ecumenicity may be derived from three *Manual* statements :

"The Church of God is composed of all spiritually regenerate persons, whose names are written in heaven."³²

²⁸ L. PARROTT, *Introducing the Nazarenes* (Kansas City, Nazarene Publishing House, 1969), pp. 25 ff.

²⁹ LESSLIE NEWBIGIN, *The Household of God* (New York : Friendship Press, 1953), p. 95.

³⁰ PARROTT, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

³¹ *Manual, Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City : Nazarene Publishing House, 1968), p. 5.

³² *Ibid.*, par. 21.

“The Church of the Nazarene is composed of those persons who have voluntarily associated themselves together according to the doctrines and polity of the said Church, and who seek holy Christian fellowship, the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of believers, their upbuilding in holiness, and the simplicity and spiritual power manifest in the primitive New Testament Church, together with the preaching of the gospel to every creature.”³³

“In order that we may co-operate effectually with the other branches of the Church of Jesus Christ in advancing God’s Kingdom among men we ... set forth ... the Articles of Faith ...”³⁴

Nazarenes thus recognize the Body of Christ as composed of all regenerate persons. They understand themselves as a holiness body within the broader Church, commissioned to spread scriptural holiness and preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. In carrying out this special commission they seek to co-operate with all other branches of the Church in advancing God’s kingdom on earth.

This has been the spirit of the Church from its inception. Born in the interdenominational holiness revival of the nineteenth century, it early learned to distinguish between what it perceives as the essentials and non-essentials in Christian faith. At the same time its clear sense of mission has begotten an intensity of commitment which has appeared to be sectarian to outsiders. Nevertheless, in its endeavour to carry out its role the Church has demonstrated its willingness to work with other Christians. Appropriate units of the Church of the Nazarene have co-operated with and been members of the various councils which later became sections of the National Council of Churches — foreign missions, religious education, higher education, radio and stewardship. Co-operation continued as these councils came into the National Council of Churches, although there has been decided withdrawal in recent years because of a growing disenchantment with the National Council of Churches. On the local level, however, co-operation with a broad group of Christian denominations is a common practice. The denomination has co-operated in various ways with the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Holiness Association, but has never united with the NAE ; it officially joined the NHA in 1968.

Nazarenes sustain a fraternal relation with the other holiness groups and since 1960 have been actively involved with curriculum planning and

³³ *Manual*, par. 23.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Preamble to the Articles of Faith.

publication with nine other Wesleyan bodies. Some Nazarenes would be happy to see an organic union of Wesleyan holiness denominations, but others still doubt that the merging of denominational structures is the way to accomplish the kind of witness and ecumenicity they seek. The Nazarene position in regard to the World Council of Churches is not clear. In view of the openness of the World Council Constitution and its neutrality on doctrinal and ecclesiastical matters, however, some Nazarenes are seriously asking if it is possible for the Church to find a holiness witness and engagement within the World Council of Churches.

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